

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 1, 2001

LB 543

SENATOR CHAMBERS: What I could do, if I was of a mind to really punish you, every time I get ready to speak again, is steal something from Fats Domino, a person that Senator Bourne probably has never heard of. And one of his songs that scored very highly was "Yes It's Me and I'm in Love Again". Only I would paraphrase that. Because it is me again, and I am in love with what I'm doing. And I'm going to keep doing it. I want to deconstruct this system that is so inappropriate. I don't know what the rationale is for a state creating a fund exclusively for the use of church schools, exclusively. It excludes any student who wants to go to a public school. Let's say that the money in the two public school funds would be exhausted, because there are more children going to public schools, but there's money still available in the church school fund. The public school children could not get that money. They are prohibited by law from access to that money. Now, if we were to pass a law and say that Catholic children cannot go to public schools, that law would be struck down, as it should be. But the Catholics love a fund that says, this is only for religious schools, and the public school children cannot get any of that money. Religious schools, less Bellevue. That's what we're looking at. And my colleagues are comfortable with that, apparently. But I'm not. So I'm going to have to do the work that all of us should be doing. If I speak three times on each one of these amendments, then you consider that that would not be very many people if each one spoke one time, instead of me speaking three. But we do not have that many people who feel the way that I feel about this, or who are willing to say anything about it. But as long as the opportunity to fight against this inappropriate appropriation is available, I have to continue dealing with it. Nobody can give a rationale that makes sense, in a secular society, for a legislature creating a fund exclusively for the use of church schools, minus Bellevue. But that's what the Nebraska Legislature has done, because the Nebraska Legislature is weak, and collectively, in some of the things it does, weak minded. I have to separate myself from a group that would do such a thing. I'm a member of the collective Legislature. But when it does things I disagree with, I stand up and say, that's not me, that's them. I am in the Legislature, but I'm not of the Legislature when they carry on in a way that is crack-brained. By the way, that brings me to something that